



Queensland University of Technology
Brisbane Australia

This is the author's version of a work that was submitted/accepted for publication in the following source:

Johnson, Brett, Buckley, Jeff, [Crane, Philip R.](#), & Leebeck, Maria (2013) *Re-visioning the Queensland Youth Sector : principles to inform the Queensland Government's youth strategy and review process*. [Working Paper] (Unpublished)

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Re-visioning the Queensland Youth Sector: Principles to inform the Queensland Government's Youth Strategy and Review Process

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This discussion paper has been provided to assist the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (DOCCSDS) in developing the Queensland Government's Youth Strategy and inform the review of all state government funded youth services.

The paper lists a number of key concepts and social determinants which need to be considered in this undertaking. Additionally, it proposes a number key concepts and principles pertinent to understanding and working with young people. A number of key-principles underpinning quality youth service provision are also provided.

This review process provides an opportunity for the Queensland Government to meld tested, evidence based models with a contemporary and innovative service delivery framework. The paper proposes:

1. **Developmental consideration** must be given to age, gender, culture, sexual identity, support needs and skill levels when developing responses to young people's needs
2. Policy development should be underpinned by a **Vulnerable Youth Framework** in order to conceptualise programmatic responses and assist in providing an appropriate quantum of community support and services
3. A **continuum model** should be adopted whereby the State Government can map the investment to services which applicably respond to the varying degrees of risk or actual harm, spanning from universal education and prevention, to early intervention, to crisis intervention and transition to independence
4. A **contemporary service system** needs to recognise and respond to the multifaceted and challenging needs of young people experiencing **complex problems as well as empowering** organisations and communities to develop service models that drive to outcomes in a specific context
5. **Achieving social inclusion** - in its true sense - requires a **planned, place-based approach** which seeks to identify the level of need and the corresponding quantum of investment required to effectively respond - with consideration given to the geographical area requiring coverage and emphasis on strategic outcomes
6. Service system responses which focus on improving and sustaining **young people's access to learning and earning opportunities**, or provide a pathway to such opportunities **are considered best practice**
7. A **balance between a state-wide youth practice framework** and the **flexibility in local community services to implement this framework** suitably is required when developing appropriate service agreements for frontline youth services
8. Supporting at-risk young people requires a **whole of government approach**, and **genuine input from a number of sectors** to guide the development and design of policy which will enhance the support provided to young people and acknowledge the needs of services which work with them.

In a changing environment, consideration needs to be given to a range of variables, including: the capacity of services and workers, the unique and specific needs prevalent in specific locations and broader community demographics.

Additionally, a shift to re-design how the youth sector is resourced to respond to the needs of young people must combine a mix of evidence based models with program logic which can be applied in contemporary settings adaptable to the diversity of various regions and service contexts, and local inquiry processes which drive to locally relevant and effective strategies.

Re-Visioning the Queensland Youth Sector

Principles to inform the Queensland Government's Youth Strategy and Sector Review Process

A Discussion Paper

Authors: Brett Johnson, Jeff Buckley, Dr Phil Crane, Maria Leebeek

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1. CURRENT CONTEXT

1.1) State Government Priorities

The Queensland State Government has articulated a number of social, economic and political drivers which are influencing its current and future investment in the community sector. On the top of this list is the imperative to deliver budget and fiscal repair as outlined within the Commission of Audit. This is coupled with a desire to create a more market-based supply of support and promote individuals' choice and control over what sorts of services they access.

Other activities currently being rolled out from the state government include the Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection, development of a Youth Strategy, funding increases for people with a disability and children in care, early intervention for women and seniors, and boot camps for both young offenders and/or 'at-risk' young people, depending on the location.

Importantly, the government has articulated a focus on critical frontline community services.

1.2) Recommissioning

On the basis of these priorities, Hon. Tracy Davis MP, Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, announced her intentions to recommission existing youth sector funding across the State in 2013. The funding programs which will be recommissioned include:

- Youth At Risk Initiative
- Youth Support Coordinator Initiative
- Addressing Volatile Substance Misuse

The Minister has also indicated that the homelessness service system is to be recast - including youth homelessness services to be recommissioned - and that youth specific homelessness services would be considered during the youth service review process.

As part of this recommissioning process, the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services have sought input and feedback from funded services and the broader youth sector. This discussion paper seeks to inform this process by outlining a number of key concepts and principles pertinent to understanding and working with young people.

2. YOUNG PEOPLE, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

2.1) Age, Terminology and Developmental Concepts

Young people are defined (using the ABS definition) as being between the ages of 12 to 25 years which is inclusive of the adolescent development age range. (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013)

Adolescent development is generally seen to be in three stages:

- Early adolescence: 12 to 14 years
- Middle adolescence: 15 to 16 years
- Late adolescence: 17 – 19 years

For some young people, adolescence is a time of great change for both themselves and their families and is evident through changes that are:

- Biological – physical
- Psychological – thinking and feeling
- Social – how they relate to the world around them
- Institutional - changing relationships to family, education, work and the law.

This does not imply that social welfare responses will be the same for all young people. Consideration must be given to age, gender, culture, sexual identity, support needs and skill levels when developing responses to young people's needs. It must also be noted that there are a number of legislative frameworks that guide responses to young people.

2.2) Vulnerable Youth Framework

Young people are not a homogenous group and there can be substantial barriers for individuals and cohorts of young people in achieving objective and/or subjective wellbeing. These barriers exist at various levels, with wellbeing arising out of a complex interplay between individual, situational, locational, economic, socio-cultural, institutional and systemic interactions.

Those young people whose pathways to wellbeing have been compromised (regardless of the source) are considered to be disadvantaged or vulnerable.

As indicated in the Vulnerable Youth Framework below, most young people (Level 1) transition through adolescence without experiencing any significant stress or crisis, and/or any problems or vulnerabilities are managed by existing familial, material, social and cultural supports. However, for a percentage of young people (Level 2), these supports are limited and require early intervention responses or, in some respects simply do not exist - or their level of vulnerability is so high that additional intervention is required to ensure their safety and wellbeing (Levels 3 and 4).

The Vulnerable Youth Framework can be useful when conceptualising programmatic responses so that the needs of young people from across the spectrum are being met with an appropriate and corresponding quantum of community support and service provision.

The Vulnerable Youth Framework is a mechanism by which efforts can be concentrated across government to create consistent responses and coordinated approaches both locally and across the State.

1. All young people (10 to 25 years)			
Vulnerability managed through family, recreation, social, cultural support			
Risk factors: Traumatic life events (death of family / friend) Difficulty with peers	2. Experiencing additional problems		
	Vulnerability requires early interventions		
	Risk factors: Low level truancy First contact with police Emerging mental health issues Experimental AOD use Family conflict Unstable peer group Isolated pregnant / teenage parent	3. Highly vulnerable Requires comprehensive coordinated interventions Risk factors: Left home / homelessness Disengaged from family Significant AOD use Not working or in education Mental health issues Frequent truancy Family violence Sexual abuse	4. High risk Requires intensive interventions Risk factors: Co-occurring chronic problems (such as AOD use and mental health) Criminal Children's or Adult Court Orders Out of home care Multiple high risk behaviours

Figure 1: Vulnerable Youth Framework.

Source: *Development of a policy framework for Victoria's vulnerable young people, Victorian Government, 2008.*
p12

2.3) Risk vs Protective Factors

The Vulnerable Youth Framework is useful in identifying common risks or harms that certain groups of young people face. However it does not explain why some young people fare better than their peers even though they face identical circumstances and risks. Therefore it is useful to extend upon this framework by identifying the range of **both risk and protective factors**, and how these interplay to determine the overall **resilience** levels of a young person. The following table lists the various risk and protective factors across **social, environmental** and **individual** domains.

Social Factors		
Location	Protective factors	Risk factors
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · regular school attendance · positive relationships with teachers, coaches and peers · participation and achievement in school activities · access to personal, interactional and academic support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · academic challenges · truancy · peer rejection · bullying · suspension and exclusion · perceived irrelevance of school · lack of support for learning needs · ascertained learning difficulties
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · nurturing, supportive attachments to family and extended kinship networks · parental supervision and interest in child's growth and development · parent access to relevant resources and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · family conflict and violence · neglect or abuse · parental rejection · lack of consistent nurturing and supervision · family poverty and isolation · parental offending · alcohol and drug dependencies
Peer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · associating with pro-social peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · associating with offending peers · participating in anti-social behaviour
Environmental Factors		
Location	Protective factors	Risk factors
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · stable and affordable housing · access to services · participation in community activities, such as sport and recreation · involvement with supportive adults · income security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · lack of support services · socio-economic disadvantage · discrimination · lack of training or employment · non-participation in sport or social/recreational clubs and activities · lack of income · lack of housing security
Life events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · avoiding, surviving and recovering from the harm caused by loss and trauma 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · death and loss · severe trauma · repeated out-of-home-placements · exiting care · early pregnancy · homelessness
Individual Factors		
Location	Protective factors	Risk factors
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · pro-social attitudes · competent social skills · regard for self and others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · offending history · poor social skills · low self-esteem

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · substance avoidance · self confidence · positive sense of identity and belonging · healthy diet, weight, activity, fitness and mental wellbeing · sexual health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · self injury · substance misuse/dependency · anti-social attitudes and behaviour · low self-control · disregard for others · poor physical, mental or sexual health
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This table is useful in integrating a deficit (or needs-based) understanding with a strengths-based approach. A strengths-based approach asserts that individuals, families and communities have particular strengths that need to be recognised in the process of assisting them. In Youth Work Practice, this is often linked to the notion of 'youth-friendly' service provision.

Increasingly, the issues faced by young people are understood as being characterised by **complexity**. The implication is that effective responses for young people need to appreciate the constellation of factors that may exist at any one time in a young person's life. These are influenced by such things as geography, culture, complicated service system environments and the complexities of the problems experienced themselves.

According to her article "Complex Solutions for Complex Needs" (2009, Youth Studies Australia) Sally Beadle summarises the implications of complexity. She suggests that:

"[W]hile a young person may present at a service for a specific problem, such as substance use, family issues or homelessness, often that problem is linked to several other interrelated problems. This pattern is not surprising given the evidence that social exclusion indicators such as poor housing, unemployment and lack of participation in meaningful activities are commonly identified in association with mental and physical ill-health and are known to contribute to increased complexity and worse outcomes (Health-Canada 2002; National Economic and Social Forum 2007; UK Department of Health 2002; Wilkinson & Marmot 2003).

Policymakers and practitioners in the sector face the longstanding challenge of evolving the service system to recognise and respond to the multifaceted and challenging needs of young people experiencing complex problems. Fragmentation and inflexibility between and within health and social services have been identified as particular obstacles in this process (Edwards 2003; Rankin & Regan 2004)."

COMPLEX CASE EXAMPLE:

Harold is a 14 year old Indigenous male living in a regional centre in Queensland. He does not attend school and is a daily paint-sniffer. He is under a Child Protection Order and has been in foster care since age 2. He has since been in approximately 15 different foster placements, each one breaking down due to his difficult behaviours. He continually self-places and is currently staying with older drug using friends. He regularly comes to the attention of the police due to his daily inhalant use and has a range of Youth Justice Orders, mainly for shoplifting, wilful damage and other public offences. There is a query Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and suspected cognitive impairment on account of his acute substance use. Workers are noticing that he is showing increasing signs of depression and is also beginning to develop psychotic symptoms. There are real concerns for his safety due to the high number of suicides in the community.

2.4) Diverse Contexts and Needs

An understandable goal of government is for all young people to live in socially-inclusive communities and engage in mainstream, universal systems. Unfortunately this is not always the case. Achieving this level of inclusion

requires a planned, place-based response that deliberately builds and sustains engagement for particular sections of the community.

For example, evidence shows that some young people may experience particular vulnerabilities, in particular:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people;
- Young people from diverse cultural backgrounds;
- Young people experiencing mental health issues or significant psychiatric illness
- Same sex attracted and gender diverse young people;
- Young people with substance use issues.
- Young people who are pregnant and parenting
- Young people with an intellectual disability or learning difficulties.

Over the years, a range of strategies and programs have been successful in achieving this goal for young people, particularly those that focus on keeping young people engaged in school and work or connected to their families and communities.

2.5) Young People and their Families

As the need for more holistic approaches to complex needs has been recognised, programs and services for young people have increasingly appreciated the significance of families and informal social support in working with young people.

Families and others who have an ongoing connection with young people are an important focus for youth work interventions for a number of reasons. Generally, families are a significant (or potential) source of economic, material, emotional, and social support, and young people are often dependent on parents and care-givers for resources. Conversely, family factors can be a major cause of stress and trauma and a significant number of those young people who either disengage from school or work and/or experience social dislocation and homelessness come from highly dysfunctional or abusive family environments.

Evidence shows that connection to “a family” is a significant protective factor for longer term wellbeing. Importantly, this is not always the biological family of origin. Sophisticated youth work interventions recognise the ideal extent of involvement that biological families - and other types of ‘families’ - can play in a tailored youth work response on a case-by-case basis, as well as the role that new relationships play in the development of enlarged ‘families of destination’.

2.6) Young People and their Communities

Young people are also members of communities. A number of community level characteristics have emerged as having a positive or negative impact on a young person’s wellbeing. These include feeling welcomed and valued in their community, safety and freedom of movement, a variety of interesting activity options, cohesive community identity, safe green spaces, provision of basic needs such as food, water, electricity, medical care, sanitation, security of tenure, peer gathering places that are safe and accessible where they can meet others/ play, and a tradition of community organising and mutual help. Building these community characteristics for all young people, including those who have high vulnerability, as well as other members of the community, is essential.

2.7) Young People, Learning and Earning

Learning and earning opportunities are critical to the lifelong wellbeing of young people. Service systems responses which focus on improving and sustaining young people’s access to or engagement in these opportunities are considered best practice. An inclusive approach which supports multiple pathways is critical to the participation of all young people in opportunities which result in lifelong wellbeing.

Behaviour management in schools should be located within a broader community / pastoral care approach where

the social and emotional wellbeing of young people is more broadly understood and responded to. The youth sector provides a vital role in creating critical links between the education and community sectors. Further the youth sector can case-manage responses which build the social and emotional wellbeing of young people thereby enabling schools to maximise learning outcomes.

Schools also operate within a tight legislative framework and therefore have a strong requirement to report issues of concerns to either parents and/or Child Safety. Whilst it is important that large systems have clear reporting systems, many vulnerable young people choose not to self-disclose issues of risk or harm for fear of breached confidentiality. Attaching an independent youth sector response, delivered at the school but not located within it, can provide an effective work-around in instances like these, responding to individual young people's needs in a confidential and client-centred manner, whilst maintaining professional duties to report to authorities when genuine risk of harm is detected. This approach can often preserve the role of the school and its primary educative function whilst also preserving the young person's confidentiality, consent and overall engagement in the school system.

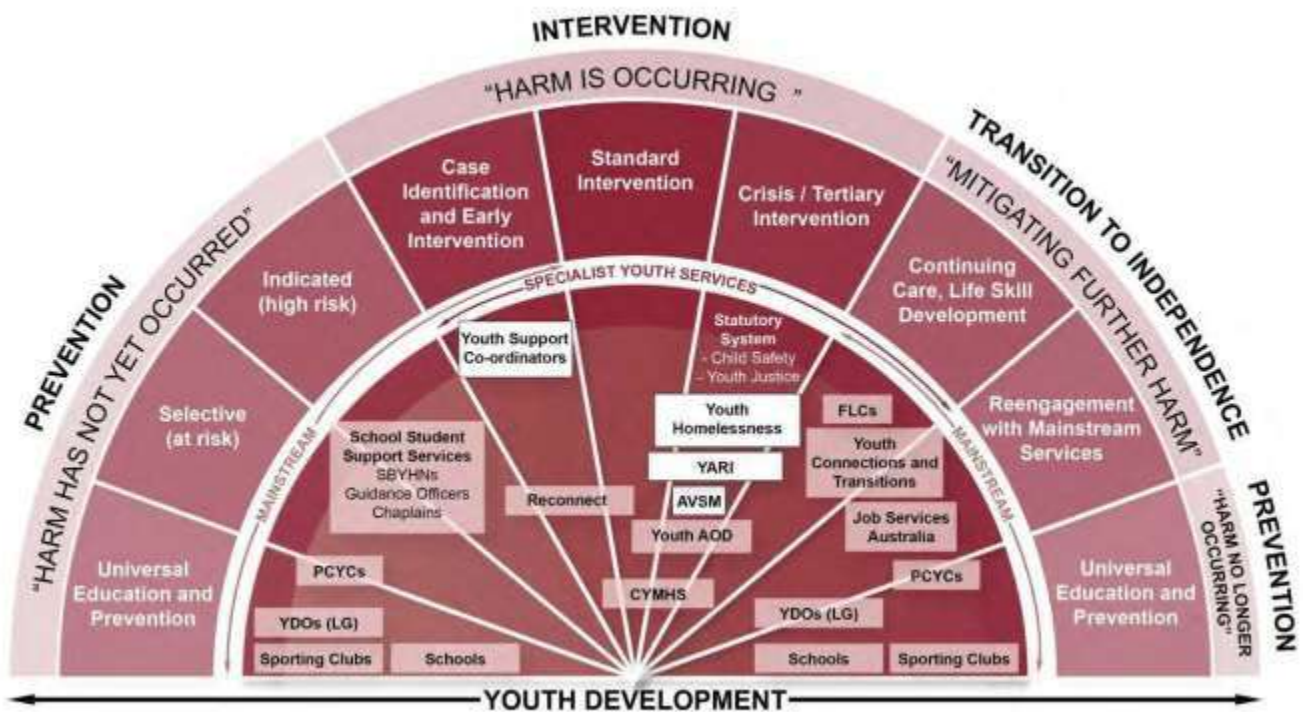
Young people's relationship to the labour market (earning) has changed dramatically in recent decades. It is now commonplace for young people to combine education with some form of work, to combine schooling with vocational training, and post-secondary work with some form of further education. Young people not engaged in earning or learning are considered to be highly vulnerable in a range of respects. Youth services often find they need to respond to both learning and earning aspects of young people and their families lives, often via the goal of engagement or sustaining participation.

3. LOCATING SERVICE RESPONSES ALONG A CONTINUUM

On the basis of this understanding of young people, their families and communities, an effective youth services system is one where there is an understanding of:

- The characteristics (using a resilience framework) of young people,
- The need to develop targeted responses for particular groups,
- So as to provide a continuum of effective responses.

The following diagram provides a schematic overview of the continuum of possible youth service responses available.



This Continuum demonstrates the need to offer a range of service responses to young people based on the level of risk or actual harm.

It is important to recognise that this Continuum does not indicate the relative size or distribution of these services across Queensland. Many of these funding streams employ one or two workers only for very large catchment areas, whilst some regions do not receive any funding at all. A case-by-case or place-based approach is therefore required when seeking to identify level of need and the corresponding quantum of investment required to effectively respond - with consideration given to the geographical area requiring coverage.

3.1) The complementary role of mainstream and specialist youth services

This graphic also suggests that there is a distinct, complementary and articulated role for both mainstream and specialist youth services.

There are two distinct roles for broad-scale, mainstream service provision:

- Firstly, for all young people regardless of age, location or life circumstances; and
- Secondly for those young people who have experienced harm and received a subsequent successful intervention from a specialist service system, and need sustainable re-engagement back into an inclusive mainstream environment.

Similarly, there is a distinct role for a separate, specialist youth service system:

- As a safety net for those young people who are unable to maintain their engagement in mainstream systems, with a focus on delivering interventions that are high quality, sophisticated, draw upon the range of resources available within a complex health and welfare service system, and is trauma-informed (where necessary).
- As a means to ensuring individual young people's safety and preventing those young people who require extra support from disrupting provision of mainstream health and education services to others.

Always, the intention of providing separate, intensive, specialist support should be to minimise the risk factors in a young person's life whilst building their levels of resilience with the aim of transitioning or re-integrating back into

mainstream service systems as quickly as possible.

It is also important to recognise that re-engagement with the mainstream service system will not be possible for a small proportion of young people. In these instances, long-term, intensive support is required, and is often provided by statutory and non-statutory services simultaneously. Furthermore, many of these young people will require transitioning to the adult health, education, welfare or statutory systems at various age-points (eg at 16, 17, 18 or 26 years of age).

Once a continuum framework is articulated an integrated service system can be developed.

4. WHAT WORKS? KEY PRINCIPLES IN EFFECTIVE YOUTH SERVICES

4.1) Essential components for effective services:

The essence of any youth service is that they must be able to demonstrate their capacity to respond to the needs of young people in their service delivery model, this means:

- An understanding of the range of needs of young people
- The ability to engage young people through a relational model of practice
- The capacity to be flexible in responding to the needs of young people and their families
- The ability to provide a soft entry point in a range of settings (see below)
- Work with the young person for the full duration of need
- Are committed to practice that embraces wellbeing and social inclusion
- Work occurs within the context of families and their communities where possible
- Employing a well-paid and qualified youth specific workforce

There must also be considerations about the capacity of the organisation in terms of its relationship to the local community that they are situated in - that the service must contribute to the social capital and demonstrate their ongoing links to their local community. In doing so there is a guarantee about the continuity of care for young people based within a community capacity building framework. This is particularly important in Queensland where there are a limited number of services in rural and regional Queensland which can provide a range of supports as opposed to funding services that have a “fly-in & fly out” framework.

4.2) Flexible, integrated service models:

Services must also be integrated so that there is a holistic response to young people. It is essential that organisations are able to develop service models that drive to outcomes in a specific context (not models of service that are centrally specified for rolling out). It is essential that Service Agreements embrace at their core this concept of flexible service delivery. Key features of flexible, outcomes-oriented services are:

- engaged collaboratively with a wide range of key stakeholders
- invited to collaborate in creating innovative linkages and processes
- adopt a partnership/ action learning/ learning organisation/ action research approach to developing and refining models of practice which promote wellbeing and social inclusion

Good youth work responses should be able to flexibly engage and respond to the young person’s specific situation in a way that the young person finds useful. Many agencies employ a range of engagement strategies including outreach, activity-based approaches and drop-in, rather than purely appointment based work. Responses can include a mix of experiential and verbal, structured and unstructured, individual and group strategies. When young people’s circumstances change, practitioners require flexibility, drawing on a ‘toolbox’ of possible responses, for example, switching from counselling to the provision of material support.

It must be acknowledged that there needs to be a developmental process for services around collaboration. Any

investment by government into collaborative processes can be levered back into the system when the collaboration seeks alternate funding sources ie philanthropic, social bonds etc.

Furthermore, the 'one size fits all' prescriptive program methodology does not allow communities and local services to make an assessment on their own particular needs, and to attribute expenditure to areas of most significant concern. A balance needs to be found between the governance and parameters of government funded initiatives and local design of programming and service response.

4.3) Relationally-focused:

Young people want clear practical support from someone they can trust and feel respected by, particularly those vulnerable young people who do not have strong family and/or social support networks. Trust is a critical element underpinning effective, ethical and culturally secure youth work practice. Many vulnerable young people have experienced multiple workers in their lives. Providing consistency can enhance the development of a trusting relationship. When specialist expertise is needed, referral 'in' rather than referral 'out' should be considered where possible. Referral 'out' should be assertively supported.

At the broader level young people have relationships with families, communities, schooling, and each other. A relational approach seeks to enhance and sustain the relationships that young people and others have across a range of settings. This is a two way process and not a matter of young people being the sole target of support and change.

Consumer-led and/or peer-based education and support models are also consistent with this approach, and there is evidence of their success in certain circumstances and areas, particularly mental health and alcohol and drug settings. These models should be explored and supported where possible, provided they are adequately resourced and managed internally.

4.4) Multi-faceted:

As mentioned earlier, young people who experience hardship in one part of their life often also experience problems in other areas, such as schooling, employment, health, relationships, socially etc. Sophisticated youth services are able to address these multi-faceted issues and concerns simultaneously, often using a mixed-model approach (eg not just counselling or standalone drop-in models)

4.5) Proactive:

Many young people do not understand the conventions of 'help seeking', or that particular services exist to help them. As a result many 'youth friendly' services adopt assertive approaches to identifying and engaging the young people they target. Common examples include assertive outreach (sometimes known as 'case finding'), co-location with existing points of contact, or providing free activities which appeal to the target group. These provide opportunities for relationships to be built between workers and young people, often in informal, non-threatening settings.

4.6) Legally and ethically mindful:

Both government and non-government services need to recognise a complex array of considerations which are both legal and ethical in nature. What role should young people of different ages, situations and development play in developing interventions involving them? How is *informed consent* understood in different practice contexts? How are risks understood and managed? What are appropriate practice methods to employ in a particular context? What cultural considerations are there? This is a large and complex area of practice, and one that requires critical reflection and a commitment to ongoing professional development.

4.7) Cross-government, cross-sector arrangements:

It is essential to acknowledge that supporting young people requires government working in partnership with the non-government sector in order to provide a holistic response.

Additionally, the needs of young people and how those needs are met should not be the sole responsibility of one government department. It requires all State Government departments to contribute to the development of a legitimate strategy incorporating and considering the varying intersections each agency has with young Queenslanders.

An explicit partnership approach to developing a regional youth strategy could be developed building on and enlarging current networks. Each individual region needs to determine who or what entity is best positioned to undertake local area coordination. In many instances Local Government is best placed or resourced to facilitate and coordinate the provision of services across local areas and regions through a dedicated position, such as a Youth Development Officer or equivalent. As the sphere of government closest to the people, councils often have the greatest understanding and knowledge of the needs of individual communities and can work effectively and collaboratively with services that provide support to young people. For example, in many areas Local Government is influential in facilitating place-based program design and coordinating inter-agency networks.

When a young person is being supported by multiple workers and/or agencies, or is transitioning between services, there needs to be a clear articulation of the various roles and responsibilities of all players.

There are many examples where coordinated case management models have been achieved through all levels of government working together with the community services sector (eg Complex Needs Panels operating in Cairns and Brisbane)

4.8) Focus on workforce development:

A well-qualified workforce is required to provide good quality outcomes for both community and government. We need to support and invest in the workforce to keep abreast of changes relating to the available evidence-base around youth and community practice, shifting policy and organisational contexts, and opportunities afforded by new technologies. This requires a commitment to an integrated workforce development strategy which is adequately resourced to provide ongoing professional development, supervision and case advice. This requires practitioners to hold a minimum qualification in order to undertake particular youth work roles, particularly when delivering critical services such as child protection assessments and interventions or mental health responses.

5. FINAL COMMENTS - MAKING A DIFFERENCE

- To make a difference we need to encourage ongoing inquiry into what constitutes effective responses and practice to the complexity of issues faced by young people and their families in particular social and geographic contexts. Such processes allow for a range of relevant evidence, including the perspectives of vulnerable young people and their families to be actively sought and considered.
- To make difference a balance is needed between a centralised, statewide practice framework and the flexibility of local community services to implement this framework suitably. Additionally, to respond holistically, programs and response methods need to align with community planning schemes and localised service systems. Previous funding guidelines have not always successfully balanced the need for a prescriptive output-based responses with the benefits derived from allowing flexible funding arrangements.
- We need an approach which allows for a range of variables to be considered, including: capacity of services and workers, unique and specific needs prevalent in specific locations and broader community demographics. A balanced model empowers local communities to ensure that responses are best-targeted and facilitated to cater for specific and unique needs which are identified in individual regions, whilst providing overall policy coherence and sufficient infrastructure support to make this efficient, effective, and provide a worthwhile return on investment.

This paper has been developed collaboratively between representatives from LGAQ, Dovetail, Queensland Youth Housing Coalition and QUT, responding to the request by your Department to consolidate the thinking between organisations. Further input has been provided by professionals within the sector who've had extensive experience with youth and homelessness policy design.

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For further in-depth information or commentary on frameworks for working with vulnerable young people we recommend:

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